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Adoption of the report of the Committee on its forty-third session

Rapporteur: Mr. Jerry **Kramer** (Canada)

Addendum

Coordination questions: report of the United Nations system Chief Executives Board for Coordination

(Item 5 (a))

Annual overview report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination for 2002

1. At its 6th meeting on 11 June 2003, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered the annual overview report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination for 2002 (E/2003/55). The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the report and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the report.

2. It was noted that the annual overview report of the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) for 2002 provided a good general overview of CEB activities, especially with respect to the follow-up to the Millennium Summit and the reporting on progress in the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, as well as the United Nations system's support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). However, the observation was made that the report should provide adequate data or evidence on results or outcomes of inter-agency coordination. Efforts should be made to avoid repetitive and vague reporting by providing more specific examples of actual accomplishments of CEB. Although the reform and restructuring of the Board and its subsidiary bodies were highly appreciated, it was felt that more needed to be done in regard to follow-up action.

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3. CEB was asked to elaborate on the outcomes of its efforts in inter-agency coordination in future reports, providing more analysis to show visible results. It was observed that the report did not fully reflect the work of CEB and that the focus of reporting should relate more to its action-oriented work. It was also suggested that a performance and evaluation regime to measure CEB achievements would prove helpful.

4. The view was expressed that CEB should make further efforts in the area of collaboration in investments in information and communications technology, as suggested by the Board of Auditors (A/57/5 (Vol. 1), para. 177). As for staff security and safety, it was noted that a new inter-agency cost sharing agreement had already been reached. It was explained that the United Nations SECOORD was independently responsible for managing the inter-agency cost sharing arrangements. CEB efforts were focused primarily on the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS in the United Nations workplace.

5. In 2002, for the first time, CEB had considered the possible roles its member organizations could play in the prevention of armed conflict. An integrated approach to preventing armed conflicts was suggested in order to incorporate political, economic and social dimensions. The issue of refugees was also addressed and it was felt that coordination of efforts in that area should be given more attention. Care should also be exercised in linking refugees and terrorism, as refugees were usually victims of conflicts, and were escaping social, political and economic tensions and dangerous circumstances in their home countries.

6. The report reflected the continued support of CEB for NEPAD and the need for greater system-wide support and coordination, particularly at the country level, was stressed. Consultations held by CEB with the NEPAD countries and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) were welcomed. It was pointed out that the section on NEPAD in the report on inter-agency cooperation should be expanded, given the importance of NEPAD to the United Nations system. It was observed that doubling official development assistance for Africa was not enough; attention needed to be given to debt relief, capital inflows, market access and stopping brain drain. Satisfaction was expressed at CEB according priority attention to Africa's development. The need to focus United Nations system support so as to produce concrete results was emphasized.

7. The World Summit on the Information Society was seen as an opportunity to discuss the interrelated aspects of the information society, including its social, economic and cultural aspects. The importance of the preparatory measures with respect to documents was stressed.

8. Regarding the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the need to implement its goals as a whole was stressed. CEB was urged to ensure that the commitments arrived at in Johannesburg were reflected in renewed political focus on the implementation of Agenda 21.

9. In the area of assistance to countries invoking Article 50 of the Charter, it was noted that the report recounted actions taken by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, but should also cover inter-agency work on the subject.

10. It was stated that the effort of CEB in coordinating inter-agency cooperation at the headquarters level should be better reflected at the country levels.

11. The view was also expressed that the key role played by CEB was that of ensuring the security and safety of United Nations staff and, in this regard, it was suggested that CEB should report on measures being taken to protect staff from the hazards of second-hand smoke on United Nations system premises.

Conclusions and recommendations

12. **The Committee took note of the annual overview report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination for 2002 (E/2003/55).**

13. **The Committee requested that future annual overview reports should be results-oriented, incorporating, among other things, expected accomplishments, indicators of achievement and progress made towards their accomplishment.**

14. **The Committee called on CEB to further strengthen coordination among United Nations agencies at the country level in harmonizing and streamlining their practices and procedures.**

15. **The Committee recommended that CEB should facilitate the exchange of information on practices in measuring programme performance and results, in measuring productivity in service functions and in collaborating on conference management.**

16. **The Committee recommended that CEB play a role in better coordinating the analysis of the problems of the countries invoking Article 50 of the Charter, and the development of new methodologies to identify the damage to affected States and new mechanisms to determine the appropriate compensation for them.**

17. **The Committee also emphasized the continued importance of the role of CEB in its system-wide coordination functions with respect to NEPAD. In this regard, the Committee stressed the need for CEB to keep under regulated review the issue of inter-agency coordination on NEPAD.**

18. **The Committee reiterated the importance of CEB as an invaluable tool in ensuring successful inter-agency cooperation within the United Nations system and, in particular, recalled the appeal made to the Secretary-General to utilize CEB to promote system-wide coordination on sustainable development and to ensure collaboration between the United Nations system and international financial institutions for the implementation of the outcomes of the Johannesburg Summit.**

19. **The Committee recommended that CEB include, in the part of its annual report devoted to inter-agency cooperation in the area of management, information on coordination and cooperation in the fields of human resources and finances.**

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Addendum

Coordination questions: New Partnership for Africa's Development

Item 5 (b)

Future engagement of the United Nations system with the New Partnership for Africa's Development

1. At its 3rd and 5th meetings on 9 and 10 June 2003 the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered the report of the Secretary-General on the future engagement of the United Nations system with the New Partnership for Africa's Development (E/AC.51/2003/6).

2. The Director of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa introduced the report and responded to questions raised during the Committee's consideration of the report at the 3rd and 5th meetings. The representative of the Economic Commission for Africa provided clarifications in response to questions. The Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Africa responded to the questions raised by the Committee at its 5th meeting, on 10 June 2003.

Discussion

3. Much appreciation was expressed for the report on the future engagement of the United Nations system with the New Partnership for Africa's Development, which was considered as useful in highlighting the evolving nature and scope of the activities of the United Nations system in support of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

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4. It was noted, that in its resolution 57/7, the General Assembly had welcomed NEPAD as the framework around which the international community, including the United Nations system should organize its support for Africa's development. It was an African-designed and African-led initiative, based on the principles of ownership and partnership, owned by African Governments and peoples. It also required international partnership for its successful implementation. NEPAD was a vehicle for Africa's economic and social development and integration.

5. The United Nations system had an important role to play in realizing the objectives of NEPAD. Noting General Assembly resolution 57/7, in particular paragraphs 24 to 33, delegations emphasized the need for the agencies of the United Nations system to enhance the coherence of, and their collaboration and coordination in their work. In this regard, satisfaction was expressed at the use of existing programming and coordination tools at the national, regional and global levels. Satisfaction was also expressed at the important coordinating role of the Economic Commission for Africa in the regional consultative meetings of United Nations agencies working in Africa.

6. Note was taken of the cluster approach adopted by the regional consultative meetings as a vehicle for coordinated response by the United Nations system, and the role envisaged for conveners of the relevant clusters. Questions were raised about some of the agencies assigned to convene certain clusters. It was suggested that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) should have been the convener of the cluster for agriculture, trade and market access; and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) for the cluster on environment, population and urbanization. It was also stressed that the scope of the cluster on peace and security should be widened to include mass education and literacy of the poor. It was stated that care should be taken so that inter-agency rivalry should not be allowed to hinder inter-agency cooperation in support of the implementation of NEPAD. Clarification was provided to the effect that conveners were considered facilitators rather than lead agencies. It was pointed out that UNCTAD was the lead agency for the sub-cluster on market access and UNEP for the sub-cluster on environment.

7. It was widely acknowledged that African countries should take a lead role in mobilizing resources for the implementation of NEPAD. They should adopt policies and measures to stimulate domestic savings, as well as to attract foreign direct investment and portfolio flows. At the same time, Africa's development partners could play an important supportive role, by increasing official development assistance and reforming the modalities for its disbursement, by granting debt cancellation and by providing trade concessions. In that regard, action to lift customs duties and quantitative restrictions on imports from, and to cancel the debt of, the least developed countries was noted.

8. One of the most significant impediments to the development of Africa was the persistence of conflicts in Africa. More effort needed to be exerted by African countries, as well as the international community, at conflict prevention, resolution and management in the region. Weak economic growth was another constraint. A preliminary report on the economic performance of Africa in 2002 showed that out of the 53 countries in the region only five had achieved a growth rate of 7 per cent and five had registered a negative growth rate. Such uneven performance

foreshadowed the difficulty that Africa would have in attaining the Millennium Development Goals.

9. The establishment of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa was welcomed as an important secretariat support structure for NEPAD at United Nations Headquarters, as envisaged in resolution 57/7. The Office of the Special Adviser on Africa would assist the Secretary-General in his advocacy role, facilitate coherence and coordination in the work of the United Nations at Headquarters and complement coordination at the national and regional levels. It was observed that the Office of the Special Adviser should be strengthened through the provision of adequate human and financial resources.

10. The view was expressed that ownership of development processes by African countries played a critical role in their success. It was noted that, at the end of September 2003, Japan would hold the third Tokyo International Conference on African Development to support NEPAD by mobilizing international resources and expanding global partnership. The hope was expressed that the deliberations there would further strengthen international efforts for African development.

11. The view was expressed that there was a need to align some clusters more closely with those United Nations agencies that had the technical and institutional comparative advantage on particular issues, and that the possibility should be considered of involving additional agencies, such as UNCTAD with regard to trade-related issues and UNEP with regard to the Action Plan of Environment Initiative of NEPAD.

Conclusions and recommendations

12. **The Committee took note and welcomed with appreciation the report of the Secretary-General on future engagement of the United Nations system with the New Partnership for Africa's Development (E/AC.51/2003/6).**

13. **The Committee also stressed that NEPAD was an initiative designed and owned by African Governments and peoples and was a genuine call for a new relationship based on constructive partnership, and emphasized that NEPAD is a holistic and integrated initiative for the social and economic development of Africa.**

14. **The Committee welcomed the implementation of NEPAD as a work in progress. It also noted that the United Nations system had demonstrated a strong commitment to NEPAD and had developed an operational framework to support NEPAD at the national, regional and global levels.**

15. **The Committee also welcomed the establishment of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, at the level of Under-Secretary-General. It further stressed that the mandate of the Office of the Special Adviser should be matched with adequate resources, in accordance with paragraph 26 of General Assembly resolution 57/300 of 20 December 2002, to enable the Office to function efficiently and effectively, as well as to have a positive impact on the implementation of NEPAD.**

16. **The Committee reiterated that support for NEPAD, as mandated by the General Assembly in paragraphs 7 and 29 of its resolution 57/7 of 4 November 2002, required that all organizations of the United Nations system work**

together in partnership with the African Union and other regional and subregional organizations to ensure the full and effective implementation of the objectives of NEPAD.

17. **The Committee recommended that relevant organizations of the United Nations system should assume the role of convener, consistent with their fields of competence and capacity, while complying with the need to avoid inter-agency rivalry, strengthening coordination and collaboration, in order to ensure their effective involvement in providing added value to the implementation of NEPAD. In this regard, the Committee stressed that the coordination function should be carried out at the regional and subregional levels by the Economic Commission for Africa and should be closely coordinated by the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa.**

18. **The Committee also emphasized the continued importance of the role of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination in its system-wide coordination functions with respect to NEPAD. In this regard, the Committee stressed the need for the Board to keep under regular review the issue of inter-agency coordination on NEPAD.**

19. **The Committee further recommended that, in order for it to continue monitoring work in progress in support of NEPAD, the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to report to the Committee at its forty-fourth session on further future engagement of the United Nations system with NEPAD.**

20. **The Committee also recommended that the General Assembly requests the Secretary-General to submit, annually, a progress report on the implementation of NEPAD, for consideration by the General Assembly under the relevant agenda item.**

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Rapporteur: Mr. Jerry **Kramer** (Canada)

Addendum

Report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Results approach in the United Nations: implementing the United Nations Millennium Declaration"

Agenda item 6

1. At its 2nd meeting, on 9 June 2003, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) entitled: "Results approach in the United Nations: implementing the United Nations Millennium Declaration" (A/57/372 and Corr.1), as well as the comments of the Secretary-General and those of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) thereon (A/57/372/Add.1).

2. Inspector Doris Bertrand introduced the JIU report and responded to questions raised during its consideration by the Committee. A representative of the CEB secretariat introduced the report containing the comments of the Secretary-General and CEB thereon.

Discussion

3. The Committee recalled that, in its resolution 57/303, the General Assembly had taken note with appreciation of the JIU report and had referred it to the Committee for its consideration. It was pointed out that part I of the report, dealing with results-based management, results-based budgeting and planning in the context of the programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 and the medium-term plan for

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the period 2002-2005 had been discussed by the Fifth Committee at the resumed fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

4. The Committee appreciated the effort made by the inspector, noting that the report highlighted important conceptual elements and that it was timely and the issues relevant. Inspector Bertrand was congratulated for having taken up extremely complex issues in a wide-ranging report, addressing a multiplicity of issues, including results-based budgeting for implementing the United Nations Millennium Declaration; achieving better system-wide coordination at the country level; more effective follow-up of the outcomes of summits and conferences; mutual accountability issues; and monitoring and reporting processes.

5. The Committee felt that the report was nevertheless complex and not readily accessible, and put forward recommendations that were too sweeping and ambitious and not practical.

6 Part I of the report, dealing with results-based management of the United Nations, raised the question of the efficacy of the current results-based budgeting, planning and programming instruments, and recommended steps that needed to be taken to improve them. Interest was shown in elements of recommendations 1 and 2, especially as they pertained to improving the capacity of the Secretariat for implementing results-based budgeting through training and related measures. Reference was made to the need to fully implement General Assembly resolution 55/231 on results-based budgeting.

7. The view was expressed that the exact meaning of the words "programmes and activities" in paragraph 12 of the report was not clear and that paragraphs 28 and 29 also seemed to dilute the value of the concept of "results" itself. The view was expressed that, taking into account paragraphs 8 and 9 of General Assembly resolution 55/231, the expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement should be properly stated as those attainable by the Organization.

8. The Committee, while recognizing the need to further improve the strategic value of the medium-term plan, considered that it remained the principal programmatic policy directive of the United Nations, which could not be replaced by the new instruments proposed by the inspector since the Organization needed a strategic framework linked to the budget process. The view was expressed concerning the relevance of maintaining the medium-term plan and the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation. It was recalled that results-based budgeting had been the subject of exhaustive examination in the Committee for Programme and Coordination and had led to revision of the Regulations and Rules. That process had culminated in the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 55/231, which was the legislative mandate for its implementation.

9. As to part II of the JIU report and its recommendations, the Committee was of the opinion that those issues did not warrant further action but contained elements that could be drawn upon by Member States and secretariats as they addressed related issues. The Committee concurred with the statement of CEB that the report would influence future thinking within the United Nations system on the wide range of issues and concerns it covered.

10. Delegations emphasized the merit of applying a results-based approach in the context of the biennial budget, and stressed the importance of expressing accomplishments and measures of achievement in less general terms in order to make them more specific in terms of what the Secretariat was accountable for.

11. The view was expressed that recommendations 3 to 8 required caution and seemed to be too ambitious. In particular, concerning recommendation 3 one delegation shared the observation of CEB in paragraph 11 of its report (A/57/372/Add.1). As to recommendation 8, the delegation pointed out that option 1 of recommendation 8 contradicted with the direction taken in the initiative by the Secretary-General presented in 2002.

12. The need for JIU to provide more focused reports was emphasized. It was questioned whether the JIU method of work was conducive to meeting the expectation of Member States and suggested a need for independent assessment of whether the system produced results commensurate with its cost.

Conclusions and recommendations

13. The Committee recommends that the General Assembly:

(a) Take note of recommendations 1 and 2, while recognizing the shared responsibility of the Secretary-General and Member States in the design of a results-based budgeting format and the prerogative of the General Assembly to approve any change to the results-based budgeting format in the medium-term plan. In that regard, the Committee recognizes the need for further training for programme managers to better implement the results-based budgeting approach in the United Nations system.

(b) Take note of recommendations 3 to 8; the Committee considers that they are not appropriate at this stage for further action, bearing in mind doubts about their feasibility and practicability.

14. The Committee recommends that JIU be urged to make additional efforts to improve the presentation and formats of its reports in order to make them more focused, concise and reader friendly, and also recommends that the General Assembly review those ongoing efforts during its fifty-eighth session.

15. The Committee notes that the General Assembly has taken note with appreciation of the JIU report and the comments of the Secretary-General and CEB thereon.